growth of the backward regions during the 9th Five Year Plan;

(b) if so, the details of the action plan for infrastructure development for backword regions in the country in general and Jharkhand region in particular; and

(c) the details of the projects identified and estimated cost thereof, project-wise and whether Government have identified the proposals for private investments/ participations and if so, the details thereof in respect of Jharkhand region?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN): (a) to (c) The 9th Five Year Plan has not been finalised as yet. The strategy for development of transport infrastructure would depend on size of the plan to be approved by the Planning Commission. It is too early at this stage to identify projects and proposals for private participation.

As regards development of National Highways in Jharkhand region in Bihar, works costing nearly Rs. 173.75 crores including the fourlanning at a cost of Rs. 127.89 crores in a length of 43 Km. on NH-2 are in different stages of progress. Further there is provision of Rs. 12.00 crore in Annual Plan 1997-1998 for development of National Highways in Jharkhand region in Bihar.

Service Tax on road transport sector

99. SHRI BRATIN SENGUPTA: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) what is the average freight per vehicle per year;

(b) the average number of vehicles on the road per year;

(c) what are the reasons that Government failed to levy Service Tax on road transport sector and thus losing potential revenue to the tune of Rs. 7500 crore and its possible deployment for road infrastructure;

(d) whether the Indian Foundation of Transport Research and Training has recommended that the Service Tax should be collected from 50 thousand transport companies; and

(e) if so, Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN): (a) to (e) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Rajya Sabha.

राजमार्गों के लिए विश्व बैंक से सहायता

100. **श्रीमती मालती शर्मा:** क्या जल-भूतल परिवहन मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या सरकार देश में राजमार्गों को चौड़ा करने तथा इनकी दशा में सुधार करने के लिए विश्व बैंक से सहायता लेने पर विचार कर रही है;

(ख) यदि हां, तो तत्संबंधी ब्यौरा क्या है; और

(ग) राजमार्गों के सुधार के लिए विश्व बैंक से ऐसी सहायता पहले कब प्राप्त की गई थी तथा प्राप्त की गई सहायता का ब्यौरा क्या है?

जल-भूतल परिवहन मंत्री (श्री टी.जी. वेंकटरामन): (क) और (ख) भारतीय राष्ट्रीय राजमार्ग प्राधिकरण ने दिल्ली से कलकत्ता और चेन्नई से मदुरै के लिए मार्गों के बारे में व्यवहार्यता अध्ययन किया है। तदुपरान्त, ये परियोजना ऋण सहायता के लिए विश्व बैंक के पास भेजी जाएंगी।

(ग) पिछली बार विश्व बैंक से द्वितीय राष्ट्रीय राजमार्ग परियोजना (उड़ीसा में राज्यीय सड़कों पर 6 पुलों के पुनर्निर्माण सहित) के लिए जून, 1992 में 306 मिलियन-अमरीकी डालर की ऋण सहायता पर हस्ताक्षर हुए थे। यह ऋण जून, 2001 में समाप्त होगा।

Changes in Nattional shipping Policy

101. PROF. NAUNIHAL SINGH: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that some changes have been made in the National Shipping Policy;

(b) if so, what are its salient features;

(c) whether it is a fact that the country's shipping capacity has been stagnant for a decade or more and the share of Cargo carried by Indian Bottoms in overseas trade has in long term decline; and

(d) if so, what steps have been taken by Government to improve this grim situation?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN): (a) and (b) The recommendations of the Shipping Policy Committee are under examination in the Government.

(c) and (d) No, Sir, the Indian tonnage has grown from 5.8 million Gross Registered Tonnes as on 1.1.1987 to 7.05 million Gross Registered Tonnes as on 1.1.1997. The cargo carried by Indian lines has also increased from 20.16 Million Tonnes in 1985-86 to 50.79 Million Tonnes in 1996-97 (provisional).

National Highways

102. SHRI MOHINDAR SINGH KALYAN: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) the length of National Highways in Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Orissa, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Bihar; and

(b) the central financial assistance provided to these States for the maintenance of National Highways during the last three years and proposed to be provided during 1997-98?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN): (a) and (b) The length of National Highways in the States and the Central financial assistance during the last three years and proposed during 1997-98 is as under:

(Maintenance & Repair)

State	Length (in Kms)	Allocation (Rs. in lakhs) 1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98
Punjab	892	736.97	770.92	1182.13	1191.75
Uttar Pradesh	2733	2065.48	2529.94	337.40	3469.19
Orissa	1649	1186.50	1447.83	1981.73	1872.00
Rajasthan	2931	1810.83	1860.72	2669.08	2381.71
Madhya Pradesh	2946	1696.01	1971.52	3176.72	2988.78
Bihar	2347	1472.53	1763.95	2193.95	2659.77

Four lane road between Hosur and Krishnagiri

103. SHRI S. MUTHU MANI: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering to construct a four lane road between Hosur and Krishnagiri in Tamil Nadu;

(b) if so, the action taken in this regard; and

(c) what are the total National Highway projects being undertaken involving Tamil Nadu and their present status?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T. G. VENKATRAMAN): (a) and (b) yes, Sir. National Highways Authority of India is taking up the 4 laning of NH-7, from Hosur to Krishnagiri in Tamil Nadu with private sectors' participation. 7 firms have been prequalified in short listing. Process of acquisition of land is underway.

(c) Annual Plan 1997-98 provides for 13 number of works. Moreover, National Highways Authority of India is also